

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO USIA WASHDC

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UNCLAS CAIRO 5306

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MEETS WITH PRESS COUNCIL

1. CAIRO PRESS OF MAY 27 REPORTS PRESIDENT SADAT'S TWO-HOUR MEETING ON MAY 26 WITH MEMBERS OF HIGHER PRESS COUNCIL. PRESIDENT SAID ALTHOUGH PRESS HAS BEEN GRANTED FULL FREEDOM, IT MUST STILL REACH PROPER FORMULA WHEREBY IT CAN BE TURNED INTO INSTITUTION OF STATE. PRESIDENT ADDED THAT WHEN PRESS ACTUALLY BECOMES INSTITUTION OF STATE, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO STIPULATE THIS IN CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL TEXTS.

2. PRESIDENT STRESSED NECESSITY OF HAVING "CODE OF HONOR" TO GOVERN WORK OF PRESS ADDING THAT, "IF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS SACRED, EGYPT IS MORE SACRED AND I AM NOT PREPARED TO RELINQUISH ANY OF HER RIGHTS." REFERRING TO DISMISSAL OF JOURNALISTS IN 1973, SADAT SAID HE HAD ISSUED THAT DECREE BECAUSE THESE JOURNALISTS HAD USED FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN A WAY THAT CAUSED HARM TO COUNTRY. PRESIDENT THEN WARNED, "I SAY THAT IF WHAT HAPPENDED AT THAT TIME IS REPEATED TODAY, I WILL RESORT TO SAME MEASURES. I HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE OR FEAR AND I WILL GO TO PEOPLE AND PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY TO TELL THEM I DID IT FOR EGYPT."

3. IN APPARENT SUGGESTION TO PRESS THAT IT ACCENT EGYPTIAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS RATHER THAN PROBLEMS, PRESIDENT CONCLUDED
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BY URGING PRESS TO ADHERE TO PRINCIPLES OF OCTOBER PAPER

WHICH CALLS ON EGYPTIANS "TO BUILD AND NOT DESTROY, TO
CORRECT AND NOT DISTORT AND TO CONSOLIDATE POSITIVE ASPECTS
OF OUR LIFE AND REMOVE NEGATIVE ONES."

4. IT WAS ALSO ANNOUNCED MAY 27 THAT PRESIDENT HAD ISSUED
DECREE APPOINTING MRS. AMINA EL SAID, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF
HAWAA, TO HIGHER PRESS COUNCIL.

5. MAY 28 EDITIONS AL GOMHOURIYA AND AL AKHBAR CARRY
EDITORIALS SUPPORTING PRESIDENT'S GUIDELINES FOR THE
PRESS.

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